

UNITED STATES PATENT APPLICATION
FOR
A SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR
HOUSING POWER SUPPLIES FOR AN ELECTRONIC DEVICE

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SPECIFICATIONTITLE OF INVENTION

**A SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR
HOUSING POWER SUPPLIES IN AN ELECTRONIC DEVICE**

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The invention is directed towards housing power supplies for an electronic device. More specifically, the invention is directed towards a chassis design for modular or attached power supply units.

BACKGROUND OF THE ART

[0002] Many electronic components, such as computer systems, need a power supply for operation. In some multi-unit systems, the power supplies need to supply a large amount of power while minimizing the volume used to house the power system.

[0003] Some typical “box” component systems have built-in power supply slots in the system itself. However, the “built-in” systems tend to conform to the measurements of the main chassis itself. In this manner, external connections between the power supplies and the components tend to bow out in an arc-like manner from the rear plane of the panel enclosing the power supplies to the connections for the components. In use, such “cord-draping” of high-current power supply cables can pose potential problems with access to other connectors at the rear of the “boxes” and the like.

[0004] When the full cord is exposed, the cords tend to become a jumble of connections that are hard to decipher. In this case, care must be taken to distinguish the cords running between the power supply and the input power connection, and the “draping” effect leads to the maximum amount of visible cord possible. This draping often leads to confusing masses of cord and/or tangles in the cords when a plurality of components and/or power supplies are involved.

[0005] Further, the cords may also pose a reliability issue. When placed near passageways, or when under service for whatever reason, the “draping” effect leads to large amounts of cord that may be inadvertently yanked or tugged. In this manner, if the cords are pulled from the connections to the electronic components, the cords may be separated from the component, the power supply, or both. When this happens the component may cease to operate, leading to downtime and possible failures to other related components.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF INVENTION

[0006] A housing for an electronic device has a first volume bounded by a first face and a second volume bounded by a second face. The second face is indented from the first face. A plurality of electronic components are housed in the first volume, and one or more power supplies are housed in the second volume. The electronic components are operable to be powered by a coupling to the one or more power supplies, the coupling running between the indented second face and the first face.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated into and constitute a part of this specification, illustrate one or more embodiments of the present invention and, together with the detailed description, serve to explain the principles and implementations of the invention.

[0008] In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a cutaway top plan view of a housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 3 is a cutaway side view of an alternative housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 4 is cutaway top plan view of the housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis of FIG. 3 in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 5 is a front perspective view of the housing, and the optional cover, according to an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 6 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 7 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 8 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with an attachable power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 9 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with an attachable power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 10 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with multiple chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0009] Embodiments of a system and method for housing power supplies for an electronic device are described herein in the context of an enclosure for the storage and operation of electronic components. Those of ordinary skill in the art will realize that the following detailed description of the present invention is illustrative only and is not intended to be in any way limiting. Other embodiments of the present invention will readily suggest themselves to such skilled persons having the benefit of this disclosure. Reference will now be made in detail to implementations of the present invention as illustrated in the accompanying drawings. The same reference indicators will be used throughout the drawings and the following detailed description to refer to the same or like parts.

[0010] In the interest of clarity, not all of the routine features of the implementations described herein are shown and described. It will, of course, be appreciated that in the development of any such actual implementation, numerous implementation-specific decisions must be made in order to achieve the developer's specific goals, such as compliance with application- and business-related constraints, and that these specific goals will vary from one implementation to another. Moreover, it will be appreciated that such a development effort might be complex and time-consuming, but would nevertheless be a routine undertaking of engineering for those of ordinary skill in the art having the benefit of this disclosure. In accordance with the present invention, the components or structures may be implemented using various types of items.

[0011] FIG. 1 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. A chassis 10

encloses both electronic components 14 and the associated power supply or supplies 12. The chassis 10 can be divided into subsections by an inner wall 11. The electronic components 14 are housed in a housing, the electronic component chassis 15, and the power supply 12 is housed within a sub-chassis 13.

[0012] When the inner wall 11 is present, the electronic component chassis 15 can be isolated from the sub-chassis 13. In this manner the electronic component(s) 14 can be protected from any environmental conditions associated with the power supply 12.

[0013] In an aspect of the invention, at least portions of the face of the sub-chassis 13 are indented from the plane of the corresponding face of the electronic component chassis 15. As shown, the sub-chassis 13 is indented from the faces of the electronic component chassis 15.

[0014] A power supply cord 16 runs from the power supply 12 to the electronic component 14. The differing plane of the electronic component chassis 15 and the sub-chassis 13 provide an overhang or ledge that shields the connector from being disturbed by external influences, such as pedestrians or other components. In the depicted embodiment, the “looping” of the connector between the electronic component 14 and the power supply 12 is protected in the vertical plane by the overhang 17 of the electronic component chassis. Thus, the risk of accidental disconnection is minimized, and the profile of the power supply cord 16 that extends beyond the profile of the chassis 10 is minimized relative to the overall profile of the system.

[0015] In an embodiment, a face 20 of the electronic component chassis 15 follows a contour at approximately a first distance from its opposite face. To create the overhang, the face of the

sub-chassis 13 is in an approximately parallel relationship to the plane of the face 20, but disposed inward in the direction towards the opposite face of electronic component chassis 15. Accordingly, the “loop” of the power supply cord 16 coupling the power supply 12 and the electronic component 14 is protected by the overhang created by the electronic component chassis 15 and the sub-chassis 13. Thus, the cord 16 impinges across the plane of the face 20 in a less intrusive manner than if the face 20 and a back face 18 of the sub-chassis 13 were at approximately the same distance from the front edge of the chassis assembly.

[0016] FIG. 2 is a cutaway top plan view of a housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In this embodiment, the chassis 10 has a plurality of power supplies 12a-d. A plurality of power supply cords 16a-d couple the respective power supplies 12a-d to the specific components within the chassis 10. The face 20 indicates the edge of the chassis housing the electronic components. The back face 18 of the sub-chassis 13 is indicated as well in the drawing. The diagram indicates that the cords tend to be placed in the described design under the ledge or within the indentation provided by the interaction of the faces of the chassis. In this manner, the couplings will more likely not be disturbed, since the silhouette of the chassis tends to protect the length of the couplings from external interference.

[0017] In one embodiment, the power supplies are placed within portions of the sub-chassis 13. Each of the power supplies 12a-d can be isolated from the other supplies by a structure, such as the walls 24a-c, noted in FIG. 2. This helps protect the individual power supplies.

[0018] It should be noted that the majority of the length of the power couplings 16a-d are contained in the volume under the overhang defined by the face 20 of the electronic component chassis 15. Thus, there is a lesser chance of the power cords 16a-d snagging on any foreign object that might come into proximity to the chassis, since power cords 16a-d tend to be protected under the overhang structure and within the indentation defined by the face of the sub-chassis 13 with respect to the electronic component chassis 15.

[0019] Further, the indentation/overhang aspect of the chassis ensures that the power couplings must extend in a horizontal manner at least the distance between the indented face 18 of the sub-chassis 13 and the overhanging back face 20 the electronic component chassis 15. Thus, the power cords 16a-d have less “play” in them, since it is used in horizontal extension. As such, the power cords 16a-d tend to run straighter between the power supplies 12a-d and the associated connection points into the electronic component chassis 15. This tends to result in neater defined coupling lines, less “tangling” of cords, and less length of cord to dangle outside the silhouette of the chassis 10 as with other types of conventional chassis designs.

[0020] FIG. 3 is a cutaway side view of an alternative housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. Many of the features as shown in FIG. 1 are present in this embodiment, including the overhang/indented orientation of the sub-chassis 13 housing the power supply 12. In this embodiment, however, a cover 26 is placed over the indentation/overhang created by the electronic component chassis 15 and the sub-chassis 13. In effect, the cover “squares off” the form of the overall chassis. This allows the power cord 16 to be even more protected from

external interference. In this case, the power coupling is almost completely protected from external interference when it runs from the sub-chassis 13 to the electronic component chassis 15.

[0021] FIG. 4 is cutaway top view of the housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis of FIG. 3, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. FIG. 4 shows that the cover 26 of FIG. 3 can be made with the same protective structures as mentioned in FIG. 2. The structures within the cover 26 tend to isolate the power supplies 16a-d from each other. Thus, the same protection afforded the power supplies from mishaps happening with the other power supplies is continued into the cover 26 with the continuation of the protective structures into the cover 26.

[0022] Should one of the power supplies 16a-d suffer adverse circumstances, the protective structures in the cover 26 shield the other power supplies such circumstances. Thus, in addition to protecting the couplings 16a-d, the cover also serves to protect the power supplies 16a-d.

[0023] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the housing, and the optional cover, according to an embodiment of the present invention. The perspective view shows the indented sub-chassis 13 housing the power supply 12, and the power cord 16 connecting the power supply to an electronic component. This view gives an idea that the indentation/overhang provides protection to the power coupling 16 from interference via external sources. Further, when the cover 26 is placed into the indentation volume, the structures within the cover 26 give further protection to the unit.

[0024] The cover 26 can be coupled by a variety of mechanisms to the chassis 10. Those of ordinary skill in the art will now know that these many coupling mechanisms exist, and this application should be read as including them. Further, those of ordinary skill in the art will now realize that the cover 26 may be coupled to the sub-chassis 13. Or the cover 26 may be coupled electronic component chassis 15. Again, this application should be read as including these types of coupling devices, including slots, hooks, rails, wings with fasteners, to name just a few.

[0025] FIG. 6 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. On this chassis, the orientation of the connecting face between the back face 20 of the electronic component chassis 15 and the sub-chassis 13 is different than that depicted in the other drawings. Those of ordinary skill in the art will now realize that the connecting face can be oriented in a number of differing ways, and this description should be read to include those orientations.

[0026] FIG. 7 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. On this chassis, the orientation of the back face 20 of the electronic component chassis 15 and corresponding face 18 of the sub-chassis 13 is different than that depicted in the other drawings. In this case, it should be noted that the face 20 and the face 18 are not in a parallel relationship. However, the overhang/indentation relationship between the faces is present. Those of ordinary skill in the art will now realize that the faces of the various chasses can be oriented in a number of differing ways relative to one another, and this description should be read to include those orientations.

[0027] FIG. 8 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with an attached power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In this chassis, the vertical relationship between the electronic component chassis 15 and the sub-chassis 13 is reversed. Those of ordinary skill in the art will now realize that the vertical relationship between the chasses may be reversed, or that any number of sub-chasses and electronic chasses may be used in the context of the invention.

[0028] FIG. 9 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with an attachable power supply chassis in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In this chassis, the sub-chassis 13 is modular, and operable to be attached to the electronic component chassis 15.

[0029] FIG. 10 is a cutaway side view of a housing for electronic components with multiple chasses in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In this aspect of the invention, the chassis 10 has multiple electronic component chasses in conjunction with a single sub-chassis. Those of ordinary skill in the art will now realize that any number of electronic component chasses may be utilized, as well as any number of sub-chasses, in the context of the invention.

[0030] Accordingly, a system and method for housing power supplies associated with an electronic device is described and illustrated. Those of ordinary skill in the art will now recognize that many modifications and variations of the present invention are possible without departing from the invention. Of course, the various features depicted in each of the figures and

the accompanying text may be combined together. Accordingly, it should be clearly understood that the present invention is not intended to be limited by the particular features specifically described and illustrated in the drawings, but the concept of the present invention is to be measured by the scope of the appended claims. It should be understood that various changes, substitutions, and alterations could be made hereto without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as described by the appended claims that follow.